

CHAPTER ELEVEN

JESUS' NEAR EXPECTATION OF THE PAROUSIA

In this chapter we raise the fourth and final question proposed above, namely in what sense exactly (if undelimited) did Jesus think of the End as imminent?

The discussion in chapter 10 resulted in the negative conclusion that we have no evidence that Jesus definitely delimited his expectation. This conclusion is confirmed in a positive way by Mk. 13, 32 par. Mtt. 24, 36 where Jesus' knowledge concerning the End excludes knowledge of its date. Of course in order for this verse to be acceptable here as evidence, its authenticity must be upheld. Bultmann¹ regards it as a creation of the Jewish-Christian apocalypticist: others² suggest it is a community saying, prompted by the Parousia-delay 'crisis'. However, against all objections to authenticity, we must regard it as doubtful that a saying, so embarrassing from early days³ would have been invented.⁴ Schniewind⁵ rightly notes that the present interim period could be given an interpretation in the entire salvation-history scheme in terms much less embarrassing (as, for instance, in II Peter 3) without recourse to such a 'solution' as this. Some⁶ argue that the expression 'the Son

¹ *Geschichte*, p. 130; cf. Klostermann, *Markus*, p. 138.

² Cf. Grässer, *Problem*, p. 82; Conzelmann, *Mitte*, p. 179, n. 1.

³ The verse certainly occasioned early embarrassment to be sure; and this may well account for its omission by Luke and the modified form of the saying in Acts 1, 7. Yet—and this is particularly true in relation to the Arian controversy later—difficulty arose not so much through any 'non-fulfilment' as through the proposition itself that Jesus could admit to ignorance: it is certainly such an embarrassment which Acts 1, 7 avoids.

⁴ Cf. e.g. Schmiedel, in *E.B.* II, col. 1881; Lagrange, *Marc*, p. 350 Taylor, *Mark*, p. 522; Lohmeyer, *Markus*, p. 283; Glasson, *Advent*, p. 97; Cullmann, *Christology*, pp. 286f.; Duncan, *Son of Man*, p. 106; Beasley-Murray, *Mark* 13, p. 109; Branscomb, *Mark*, p. 239; Cranfield, *Mark*, pp. 410f.; Kümmel, *Promise*, p. 42; Robinson, *Coming*, p. 87; Michaelis, *Verheissung*, p. 46; Schniewind, *Markus*, *ad loc.*; Fison, *Hope*, p. 127; Bosch, *Heidenmission*, p. 146.

⁵ *Markus*, *ad loc.*

⁶ Cf. Bultmann, *Geschichte*, p. 130; Bousset, *Kyrios Christos*, p. 52; Dalman, *Words*, p. 194; Kümmel, *Promise*, p. 42; Grässer, *Problem*, pp. 77f.; Klostermann, *Markus*, p. 138.

... the Father' is characteristic of the early church's vocabulary, not of Jesus'. But in answer we make the following three points: (a) the formulation of the saying could be attributed to the early church without the content of the verse being necessarily unauthentic;¹ (b) though a disputed text can hardly be used to confirm the authenticity of another disputed saying, yet Mtt. 11, 27 should not be altogether ruled out of court here. It is not impossible that Jesus spoke of 'the Son' and of 'the Father', however rarely or ambiguously;² (c) Iersel³ notes what is too often overlooked, that the formulation here in terms of 'Son... Father' actually exposes and heightens the embarrassing character of the saying, for it is precisely as Son (to whom the Father delivers up all things, Mtt. 11, 27; Lk. 10, 22) that Jesus' ignorance is problematical. The gospels are not hesitant about Jesus' ignorance of certain things,⁴ but the omission of this passage by Luke (with the significantly re-phrased expression in Acts 1, 7, whether a parallel version of the same saying, or an authentic second pronouncement) and the omission in some later manuscripts of Matthew⁵ suggest that this particular expression of ignorance was an embarrassment.⁶ It seems, therefore, quite probable that not only the concept but also the actual formulation of this saying is authentic.⁷

The verse should not be interpreted as meaning ignorance of the precise moment only (which interpretation has already been

¹ So cf. Kümmel, *Promise*, p. 42.

² Cf. Richardson, *Theology*, p. 151; Cranfield, *Mark*, p. 411; Schniewind *Markus*, *ad loc.*; Lohmeyer, *Markus*, *ad loc.*; Robinson, *Problem*, p. 81, n. 1; Beasley-Murray, *Mark* 13, pp. 105f.; Allen, in *Oxford Studies*, p. 312; Cullmann, *Christology*, pp. 286f.

³ *Der Sohn*, pp. 117ff.

⁴ Cf. e.g. Mk. 5, 9; 5, 31-32; 6, 38; 8, 5; 8, 27f., 10, 37.

⁵ οὐδὲ ὁ υἱός omitted from Mtt. 24, 36 by N^{ca} W. fl. 565. 700. Sy^s, pesh. etc. cf. also the omission in Mk. 13, 32 by Codex Montanensis and one Vulgate MS (cf. Taylor, *Mark*, *ad loc.*); cf. Gore, *Dissertations*, pp. 111f.

⁶ Thus Iersel, *Der Sohn*, pp. 117f.; cf. M'Neile, *Matthew*, p. 356. Even to-day, the expression in this explicit form causes difficulty: Dom Graham, for instance (in *Christ of Catholicism*, p. 195) writes, 'He could refrain from satisfying the undue curiosity of the disciples on a matter which they had no right to enquire (Acts 1, 7) ... As touching a point which the Father had not charged him to reveal, he could even profess his ignorance (Mk. 13, 32) ... But deep within his mind there was no absence of knowledge, whether of the past, present or future ...'

⁷ Iersel, *Der Sohn*, p. 119 (following Taylor, Schniewind, etc.) is surely right, 'Die Annahme der Authentizität dieses Logions stellt den Exegeten und Historiker eigentlich vor geringere Probleme als die Leugnen derselben.'

challenged);¹ even if, as many hold,² the context is secondary this contention stands. Further, it is entirely speculative whether this saying corresponds (as some argue)³ to a 'high point' in Jesus' development: as Branscomb comments, 'No such dependence can be put on the chronological arrangement of the Gospels as to warrant a reconstruction of the story on the basis of the present order of Jesus' sayings'⁴ and any other arrangement would require some *a priori* view of Jesus' development upon which the arrangement could proceed!

Another evasion of the verse's apparent meaning is to suppose that the Parousia is only a secondary reference and that the saying on Jesus' lips referred to some other event.⁵ However, as many object,⁶ the expression τῆς ἡμέρας ἐκείνης most naturally refers to the *End*.

Thus we find in Mk. 13, 32 par. confirmation of the conclusion that Jesus at no time delimited the coming of the Parousia. At the same time, the sense of 'nearness' is present in Jesus' expectation—particularly, as we have seen, in Mk. 14, 25 (with its emphasis on a near cessation of Jesus' lowly ministry) and Mk. 13, 30 (with the certainty that every sign of the End being 'at the door' would

¹ Cf. above, chapter 7, pp. 99f. Amongst those who hold that the confession is of a particular day only, we mention particularly, Branscomb, *Mark*, p. 239; Schlatter, *Markus*, *ad loc.*; Beasley-Murray, *Future*, pp. 189f.; *Mark* 13, pp. 105f.; Guy, *Last Things*, p. 57; Nicklin, *Gleanings*, p. 347; Guignebert, *Jesus*, p. 346; K. & S. Lake, *Introduction* p. 32. Contrast particularly, Cranfield, *Mark*, pp. 410f.; Lagrange *Marc*, p. 349; Schniewind, *Markus*, *ad loc.*; Taylor, *Mark*, *ad loc.*; Lohmeyer, *Markus*, *ad loc.*; Kümmel, *Promise*, p. 42. (M'Neile, *Matthew*, p. 355, is surely wrong in suggesting that the verse means 'God alone possesses knowledge concerning the day and hour, i.e. what it will be like—the terror and glory of it, all that it will mean to the bad and the good.' Jesus has just given considerable account of its significance and character. On the other hand, as Klostermann (*Markus*, p. 138) points out, some comment on the *date* of the End is typical conclusion for such a discourse as has preceded.)

² Cf. e.g. Iersel, *Der Sohn*, p. 121; Taylor, *Mark*, p. 522; Glasson, *Advent*, p. 97; Menzies, *Earliest Gospel*, p. 242.

³ Cf. Goguel, *Life*, pp. 570f.

⁴ *Mark*, p. 239.

⁵ Cf. Glasson, *Advent*, p. 97 (who claims that 'that day' in Lk. 17, 31 refers to the fall of Jerusalem; but we doubt this, for in v. 30 'the day when the Son of Man is revealed' suggests much rather the Parousia); Feuillet, in *R.B. LVI*, 1949, p. 87; Bowman, *Intention*, p. 61.

⁶ Iersel, *Der Sohn*, p. 121; Lagrange, *Marc*, p. 350; Taylor, *Mark*, p. 522; Kümmel, *Promise*, p. 42; Michaelis, *Verheissung*, pp. 45f.; Grässer, *Problem*, pp. 77f.; Beasley-Murray, *Future*, p. 189.

come upon that contemporary generation). This nearness is to be expounded, we suggest, by an examination of the tension inherent in Jesus' self-consciousness. (Some, recognising a tension between Jesus' near expectation and the confession of Mk. 13, 32 interpret this as a tension within Jesus' self-consciousness, but somewhat inadequately expound this tension. Beasley-Murray, for example, suggests that Jesus held two complementary attitudes: 'one derived from his consciousness of willing to do his Father's will and which would see no obstacle compelling a postponement of the End to distant times; the other bore the stamp of his filial obedience and readily subordinated itself to the sovereign will of the father, leaving to him the decision of times'.¹ Kümmel, on the other hand, rather lamely concludes, 'it must be frankly confessed that we do not know how to strike a balance between these two series of assertions'.²) To be sure, the degree of our knowledge of Jesus' self-consciousness and the precise lines to be drawn in some areas are matters of much debate. Yet for our purpose it will be sufficient to draw attention to two features of Jesus' self-understanding about which there should now be little doubt.

The first feature in Jesus' self-understanding to which we draw attention is the eschatological significance which he attached to his own person and work. Mtt. 12, 28 is important here.³ The presence of the Kingdom could be recognised in Jesus' person and work where men had eyes to see.⁴ Lk. 17, 21 is also relevant. Much discussion continues over this saying, but it seems best⁵ to regard the proximity of the Kingdom spoken of as that same proximity due to the presence of Jesus Christ. ἐντός ὑμῶν can, it is true, mean 'within you', in the sense of 'within your soul, or personality': P. M. S. Allen, indeed, noting⁶ that Liddell and Scott

¹ *Mark* 13, p. 109; following Schlatter, *Matthäus*, p. 714.

² *Promise*, p. 151.

³ See above, p. 167; for a discussion of the verse, cf. esp. Kümmel, *Promise*, pp. 106f.; Dodd, *Parables*, p. 43; Otto, *Kingdom of God*, p. 103; Manson, in *Eschatology*, p. 10; Michaelis, *Matthäus*, *ad loc*; Schniewind, *Matthäus*, *ad loc*; Flückiger, *Ursprung*, p. 95; Morgenthaler, *Kommendes Reich*, pp. 36f.; Bultmann, *Theology*, I, p. 41.

⁴ To be sure, such a presence was a μυστήριον (cf. Mk. 4, 11) and most could not discern it; but there were those who had eyes to see and ears to hear the indications of its presence.

⁵ We cannot dogmatise. Beasley-Murray, *Future*, p. 173, rightly says, it is so ambiguous, 'there is no room for dogmatism' in its interpretation.

⁶ In *E.T.* XLIX, 1938, pp. 276f.; and *E.T.* L, 1939, pp. 233f.

give no examples of ἐντός meaning 'among' thinks that such a translation would be a 'violation of the known usage of the word ἐντός'. A. Sledd¹ on the other hand, maintains that the examples which Allen offers prove only that ἐντός means 'within a certain group' or in a certain locality, not necessarily within a single individual. C. H. Roberts² cites papyri evidence in favour of the translation 'within', but Kümmel³ successfully contests this evidence.

The chief reasons against understanding ἐντός ὑμῶν in an 'interiorised' sense in Lk. 17, 21 are fairly conclusive; they are, (a) that such an idea would not accord with the general treatment of the Kingdom of God theme in the New Testament as a whole, which regards the Kingdom as an external event.⁴ Dodd's demythologized Kingdom-concept is clearly apparent when he writes (of this verse), 'although revealed in history, it essentially belongs to the spiritual order where categories of space and time are inapplicable'.⁵ As Flückiger⁶ holds, such an 'inward' view would be unique in the New Testament. (b) that the essential contrast being made in Lk. 17, 21 is not between an external view of the Kingdom of God and an internal one, but between the Pharisaic contention that the date of the End can be determined μετὰ παρατηρήσεως and Jesus' affirmation that it is rather ἐντός ὑμῶν. The translation 'the Kingdom of God is amongst you' has greater relevance as a reply here than an interpretation of the Kingdom's nature in psychological terms. (c) that 'within you' would, clearly, be strange as addressed to unbelieving Pharisees. If—as Kümmel holds⁷—this is a detached saying the setting might be Lukan; but the difficulty would remain, for Luke could be expected to spot the inappropriateness of ἐντός ὑμῶν with the Pharisees as object (if he had meant an 'interior' interpretation). Otto⁸ wants to understand ἐντός ὑμῶν impersonally and so eliminate the difficulty, but there is no evidence to support

¹ In *E.T.* L, 1939, pp. 235f.

² In *H.T.R.* XLI, 1948, pp. 1ff.

³ *Promise*, p. 35, n. 54 (following H. Riesenfeld and A. Wikgren, in *Nuntius Sodalitii Neotestamentici Upsaliensis* II, 1949, pp. 11f. and IV, 1950, pp. 27f.) cf. also Griffiths, in *E.T.* LXIII, 1951-2, pp. 30f.

⁴ Cf. Conzelmann, *Mitte*, p. 106; Beasley-Murray, *Future*, p. 175; Morgenthaler, *Kommendes Reich*, pp. 56f.

⁵ *Parables*, p. 84, n. 1.

⁶ *Ursprung*, p. 102; similarly, Morgenthaler, *Kommendes Reich*, p. 56.

⁷ *Promise*, p. 34.

⁸ *Kingdom of God*, p. 135.

such a view. Therefore in the present context and in view of the general idea of the Kingdom of God in the Gospels, it seems most likely that the Evangelist meant 'among you' and that he has faithfully recorded Jesus' meaning. In his own person and work, the Kingdom was present amongst men.

Mk. 1, 15,¹ though probably a summary of the evangelist or his source, is not improbably a true picture of Jesus' own message and again the proximity of the Kingdom in the ministry of Jesus himself is central. This aspect of Jesus' self-understanding² involves the conviction that where God is, there is eschatological glory; i.e. the revelation of God's presence cannot altogether be hidden, but insistently breaks forth.³ Hence on those occasions where Jesus' divinity is particularly affirmed,⁴ there the revelational character of the End glory is to the fore.

Without labouring the point, we may say with some confidence that Jesus regarded his own person and work in eschatological terms. This eschatological self-understanding is, however, not to be assessed in isolation, for there is a duality in Jesus' self-understanding. If his eschatological self-consciousness is assessed alone, we are left with a picture of Jesus such as Schweitzer portrayed, where there is little account of a grace-motif and where we are left wondering how Jesus' life, death and resurrection could have had any crucial role to play in salvation-history.⁵ Beside the eschatological motif there runs throughout the gospel records a *grace* character which is most dominant where expression is given to Jesus' self-consciousness.

In this connection we notice the explicit references to his mission (Mk. 10, 45; 2, 17; 1, 38,⁶ Jn. 13, 1ff.), in all of which the grace

¹ Cf. above, chapter 6, p. 90.

² Cf. further Jeremias, *Parables*, pp. 96f., concerning Jesus' self-understanding in eschatological categories.

³ Cf. Kittel and von Rad, in *T.W.N.T.* II, pp. 236ff.

⁴ Cf. esp. his baptism, Mk. 1, 9-11 par.; the Transfiguration, Mk. 9, 2-8 par.; the exorcisms, Mk. 1, 23f., etc.

⁵ The lack of this grace motif in Consistent Eschatology (noted especially by Flückiger, *Ursprung*, pp. 121-151) has already been criticised (above, chapter 3, p. 45); it accounts in part for the fact that in assessing the ultimate meaning of Jesus' life Schweitzer had to adopt an exemplary interpretation coupled with the philosophy of reverence for life.

⁶ The reference *may* be to Jesus' departure from Capernaum; but—and Luke's expression (Lk. 4, 43 *ὅτι ἐπὶ τοῦτο ἀπεστάλην*) supports this—it *may* be a reference to his entire ministry and his 'coming from God'; cf. Cranfield, *Mark*, pp. 89f.

motif is central. The same motif characterises and underlies the healing miracles where any desire to parade spectacular powers or to win popular acclaim is wholly put aside, and yet *compassion* enjoins healing action.¹ Healing is concerned especially with restoration to wholeness and soundness² and it is not accidental that in Mk. 2, 2-12 the eschatological blessings of forgiveness and healing are so intimately interwoven.³ It is in this connection that Jesus' work and words are subsumed under the term 'gospel' εὐαγγέλιον; not only because they share the nature of good news, but also because they form the content of the good news of salvation.⁴

It is because of this grace character that the End events as they occurred in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, were *veiled*. Men were thereby given time and occasion to respond with freedom and integrity to the demand to repent and believe. The eschatological motif strives to *reveal*, since the End (by definition) is the open manifestation of God's divine rule, unambiguous and irrefutable. But the grace motif strives to *veil*, so that men should not be overcome in their situation by the glory and power of God's rule, but should have time and opportunity to make up their minds in responsibility and freedom to the demand which God, in his sovereign rule, makes upon them. There is here no contradiction; but there is a real tension.⁵

To be sure, just as the eschatological element in Jesus' understanding of his person and work taken *alone* provides us with a distorted view of his self-understanding, so the grace motif taken *alone* gives an inadequate, demythologized picture. It is when these two elements are taken together and allowed to inform each

¹ Cf. Strachan, *Fourth Gospel*, pp. 2ff.; Richardson, *Miracles*, pp. 29f. *σπλαγχνίζομαι* found 12x in the Synoptics is written of Jesus in 8 cases, and (except in Mk. 9, 22 where it is besought of Jesus) it is elsewhere illustrative of his attitude (Mtt. 18, 27; Lk. 10, 33; 15, 20).

² Cf. Mk. 5, 23 *ἵνα σωθῆ καὶ ζῆσῃ*; Cairns, *The Faith that Rebels*, pp. 48ff.

³ As. e.g. Richardson, *Miracles*, pp. 66f., following Creed, *Luke*, p. 78, argues, there is no reason why the debate (vv. 5-10) should not have an authentic basis in the ministry of Jesus.

⁴ Cf. Friedrich, in *T.W.N.T.* II, pp. 705ff. ('Jesus ist der Freudenbote der erwarteten Endzeit', p. 715).

⁵ Seen in the light of this fundamentally Christological tension the explanations of duality in Jesus' thought in terms either of pastoral expediency or of epistemological necessity appear totally inadequate; cf. above, chapter 7, pp. 100ff.

other that we perceive how the grace element in Jesus' ministry formed the *raison d'être* of the veiledness of his eschatological person and work. For it is only as the End confronts man in an oblique, tangential manner, that man has even the possibility of a personal, free response to that End, its judgement and its command. Borchert expresses it in this way, 'Our liberty is a slight thing which can only be preserved in the twilight. If God were to reveal the Son clearly and indisputably to the world by external means, the liberty, development, and faith of mankind would be shattered in pieces'.¹

It is now our intention to allow this two-fold character in Jesus' self-consciousness to illuminate a reconstruction of his outlook upon the future, and so perceive the sense in which he regarded the End as 'Near'. This we do, not because there can be any *a priori* basis for believing that Jesus' view of the future must have been characterised by the same motifs as characterised his self-consciousness, but rather because the evidence of the gospel witness suggests that the same duality of motifs *does* in fact hold sway in both areas.

First, the eschatological motif. This, if assessed alone² leads to a future expectation characteristic of frenzied apocalyptists which in no way does justice to the sense of unhurried order and certainty in Jesus' ministry and outlook.³ But neither may it legitimately be denied nor re-interpreted in such a drastic manner as to dissolve its original character.⁴ Under this heading we consider the conviction that the End is near. In its future reference this nearness is not unconnected to a chronological proximity (hence it is not enough to understand it as 'eternity always menacing time',⁵ for there is a real compression of the present chronological period in the interests of the inbreak of the End in its fully manifest form).⁶ It is again a question of the nearness of glory, of open manifestation of divinity,⁷ which breaks through even in Jesus'

¹ *Original Jesus*, p. 398; cf. also Torrance, 'A Study in N.T. communication', in *S.J.T.* III, 1950, pp. 298ff.

² As in Consistent Eschatology.

³ Cf. e.g. Mtt. 26, 18; Mk. 1, 15; Jn. 7, 6; 7, 8; Mtt. 18, 7; Mk. 13, 7 and the frequent occurrence of δεῖ (cf. Grundmann, in *T.W.N.T.* II, pp. 21ff.).

⁴ Cf. above, chapters 4 and 5.

⁵ Cf. Barth's criticism of this, *C.D.* III/2, pp. 490ff.

⁶ Cf. Mk. 13, 20 par. 'except the Lord had shortened the days...'

⁷ Cf. the future reference of Mk. 4, 21 (whether we understand by ὁ λόγος Jesus' word or Jesus himself—Schniewind, *Markus, ad loc.*, thinks this latter meaning 'liegt... nicht unbedingt nahe', but cf. Cranfield, in

lowly ministry and which must ever be regarded as near at hand since its advent in that hidden, veiled ministry. The open, universal and unambiguous manifestation of the End can be postponed,¹ yet because it belongs to the End to be open and unambiguous, its manifestation must be near throughout all postponements.²

It is from this conviction that Jesus insists upon watching and expectant waiting. The parables of 'crisis' have been subjected by many³ to a critical re-interpretation and it has been claimed that they referred originally not to the Parousia but to that crisis in which Jesus' contemporaries were placed on account of his presence among them. We have seen, however, that there is no necessary ground for thinking that they could not, originally, have had the Parousia as their subject. Indeed, properly understood, the crisis in which his contemporaries were placed by Jesus' presence amongst them was (and still is!) the crisis of the nearness of the End, involving the Parousia as the crisis itself.⁴

The same must be said of the collection of Parousia parables in Mtt. 24-25. Grässer⁵ calls Mtt. 24, 45-51 a product of the early community contending with the unexpected Parousia delay! Dodd⁶ maintains that originally the master's departure and return had no stress but were merely framework; the parable 'pilloried the religious leaders of the Jews as God's unfaithful servants... it had sharp point directed to the actual situation.' Both, however, seem to

Interpretation, IX, 1955, pp. 150-155 and *Mark*, p. 164) there is an ultimate purpose of unveiling, of revelation.

¹ There is a real Parousia delay. But if this is thought of as an unexpected event, then the grace-character of Jesus' ministry is underestimated (there is a failure to see that the presence of the Holy Spirit amongst men, making faith and repentance possible, is of a piece with Jesus' own ministry); conversely, if this is regarded as a 'natural' phenomenon, and not the express gift of God's compassion (cf. II Peter 3, 9), then the urgency of the present time and the transitoriness of present institutions (particularly 'the church') will be overlooked. Hence, as Barth, *C.D.* III/2, pp. 509f., says Consistent Eschatology fails to reckon adequately with the Holy Spirit, and Realised Eschatology fails to reckon with the church's transitoriness.

² Cf. Cranfield, *Mark*, p. 408.

³ Cf. above, chapter 4, esp. pp. 64f.

⁴ The veiled Eschaton *must* threaten to become unveiled because the Eschaton *is* the universal, unambiguous manifestation of God's sovereignty. The antagonism of Realised Eschatology towards eschatology (and cf. Bultmann and others against traditional eschatology), sheds light on the need felt to re-interpret the crisis, but it does not excuse or justify that re-interpretation.

⁵ *Problem*, p. 90; cf. Bultmann, *Geschichte*, p. 125.

⁶ *Parables*, pp. 158ff.; Klostermann, *Matthäus, ad loc.*

underestimate the relevance of the parable with the Parousia as subject, to the contemporary situation in Jesus' ministry; it is spoken of those who held *no* 'near-expectation',¹ that is, those who failed to see that the universal manifestation of Jesus in glory could not be far off. The certainty and nearness of the End's coming (i.e. the eschatological motif) did not inform their use of the present period of opportunity (i.e. the grace-motif). This understanding of the parable does not necessitate finding another *Sitz im Leben* than that given it by the evangelist.

Of Mtt. 25, 1-13 Glasson says, it 'probably referred to the situation in Israel when Jesus came . . . to a time of crisis and opportunity in Israel's life, a day of visitation for which the majority were not ready . . . the reference is not to some future consummation but to the attitude of the Jewish leaders who treated lightly the great invitation.'² Objections to authenticity also arise, on account (a) of the presence of allegory;³ but this can no longer be regarded as sufficient grounds⁴ and Meinertz⁵ is justified in regarding it as a parable with allegorical aspects which can well be authentic. (b) the presence of apparent confusion of thought: Kümmel for instance, thinks v. 13 probably has been added by the evangelist, since it 'wrongly emphasises watchfulness instead of preparedness.'⁶ However, the interchange of these two related themes may be no accident, nor unoriginal—indeed it is difficult to imagine how watchfulness can rule out preparedness, or vice versa.⁷ (c) Jeremias holds that the metaphor of the bridegroom as used of Messiah is 'wholly foreign to the O.T.'⁸ and that the idea comes into the church's thought first with Paul. However, as Meinertz again points out⁹ the relation of JHWH to Israel is often depicted

¹ Cf. Michaelis, *Verheissung*, p. 92; Flückiger, *Ursprung*, p. 119.

² *Advent*, p. 93; following Dodd, *Parables*, pp. 172f.

³ Cf. Bultmann, *Geschichte*, p. 125; Bornkamm, in *In Memoriam*, p. 119; Grässer, *Problem*, pp. 119ff.; Klostermann, *Matthäus, ad loc.*; cf. Jeremias, *Parables*, p. 41. ⁴ Cf. the modifications to Jülicher's thesis, above p. 54.

⁵ In 'Die Tragweite des Gleichnisses von den zehn Jungfrauen' in *Synoptischen Studien für A. Wikenhauser*, pp. 94f.

⁶ Cf. *Promise*, p. 57; similarly Jeremias, *Parables*, p. 41; Grässer, *Problem*, p. 86; Klostermann, *Matthäus, ad loc.*

⁷ Cf. Schniewind, *Matthäus*, p. 250; Meinertz, in *Synoptischen Studien für A. Wikenhauser*, pp. 94f.

⁸ *Parables*, pp. 41f.; also in *T.W.N.T.* IV, pp. 1095f.

⁹ In *Synoptischen Studien für A. Wikenhauser*, pp. 95f.; cf. also Kümmel, *Promise*, p. 57, n. 123; Cranfield, *Mark*, pp. 109f.; Michaelis, *Verheissung*, pp. 10f.

as that of bridegroom to bride,¹ and there is no reason why this metaphor could not be authentic to Jesus.

Grässer² and Bornkamm³ contend that the delay (cf. *χρονίζοντος*) is emphasised—thus fitting in well, they say, with the situation of the early church faced with the Parousia delay and consequent 'crisis'. To be sure, the delay *is* emphasised,⁴ but in this sense: that the five foolish virgins wrongly reckoned on a delay and did not take sufficiently seriously the nearness of the bridegroom! Of course, it was their original lack of oil which caused them to be absent when he arrived, but the crux of the parable lies in the fact that they were caught unprepared, they were hoping for time which was not allowed them, and the bridegroom arrived whilst they were still making preparations.⁵ Again, the parable is seen to have adequate relevance to Jesus' contemporaries of whom it was required that they should recognise the urgency of the situation and the need to be prepared for the bridegroom's revelation and to be awaiting him.

Mtt. 25, 14-30 is again interpreted by Dodd⁶ as referring originally to the crisis brought about by Jesus' ministry, and he thinks that the Parousia reference is secondary, the departure and return of the master only framework. Grässer⁷ rightly maintains that the parable's true reference *is* the Parousia (though he exaggerates, in keeping with his thesis, the element of delay). The crisis of Jesus' presence in lowliness involves the idea of the Parousia as that for which men must now prepare.

The need for awaiting, as an imminent possibility, the coming of Jesus Christ in glory is coupled with the urgent summons to preach the gospel. This brings us to the second element in Jesus' future expectation (corresponding to the other element in his self-consciousness) namely the grace-motif. For it is this grace motif

¹ Cf. Ezek. 16, 7ff., Hos. 1-3, Is. 65, 5; Ps. 45, 3.

² *Problem*, p. 126.

³ In *In Memoriam*, pp. 119f.

⁴ Contrast Michaelis, in *Synoptischen Studien für A. Wikenhauser*, pp. 117f.; Strobel, *Untersuchungen*, pp. 233f.

⁵ It is the fact that the five foolish were not watching at the crucial moment (the point of v. 13) which is the climax of the parable and its purpose; their lack of oil—and failure to reckon with a long interval—is only the framework to show how easily they were led into a position of unpreparedness.

⁶ *Parables*, pp. 146ff.; cf. also Robinson, *Coming*, pp. 65f.

⁷ *Problem*, pp. 114f.

which underlies the Parousia delay and stands in tension with the eschatological impulse towards open manifestation of the End. We repeat, the grace element must not be omitted from our reconstruction of Jesus' outlook upon the future any more than it *alone* can be taken as the whole key to his expectation.

Under this head, the exceptionation of a future community in which Jesus' own mission might be continued, would need to be considered: the choosing of the Twelve, their training and their commissioning, etc. But some attention has already been devoted to this question¹ and this must suffice for our purposes. The major question which must occupy us here is whether or not Jesus anticipated a future gentile mission: whether the grace element in his self-consciousness informed his future hope in this way. Before discussing Mk. 13, 10 and 14, 7-9, there are two objections to the idea of a gentile mission in the mind of Jesus which we must mention.

The first is that Jesus limited himself to Israel during his own ministry and apparently directed the disciples to similar limitation during his presence with them.² However, this limitation *can* be understood in part as a matter of order ('to the Jew first',³) and in part as a matter of principle, the universality of his demand upon Israel revealing his basic attitude: Israel is God's vehicle for the inclusion of the Gentiles.⁴ So that, in both respects a wider mission, far from being excluded, appears rather to be presupposed. Further, the instances where Jesus, during his ministry, met with Gentiles,⁵ suggest that notwithstanding his self-limitation he was not unmindful of the place of the Gentiles in the entire salvation-history plan.⁶

¹ Cf. above, chapter 7, pp. 96ff.

² Cf. Mtt. 10, 6; 15, 24. Bosch, *Heidenmission*, p. 93, following his treatment of Jesus' self-limitation to Israel writes, 'Auf Grund des vorangehenden Kapitels könnte man versucht sein, Harnacks Urteil eine Heidenmission habe überhaupt nicht im Horizonte Jesu gelegen, beizupflichten. Die Tatsache der universalen Mission der Jünger nach Jesu Tod wäre dann *bestenfalls* daraus zu erklären, dass in seiner Botschaft etwas "Allgemeinmenschliches", "Universales", "Supranationales" oder "Innerliches" steckte, das die Jünger zu einer solchen weltweiten Tätigkeit anspornte. Und *schlimmstenfalls* würde man die nachösterliche Heidenmission daraus erklären müssen, dass die Jünger ihrem Meister ungehorsam waren oder ihn verhängnisvoll missverstanden haben'.

³ Cf. Bosch, *Heidenmission*, pp. 110f.; cf. above, pp. 145f.

⁴ Cf. Is. 42, 6; 49, 6; etc. Rowley, *Missionary Message*, pp. 39f.

⁵ Cf. esp. Mtt. 8; 5-13 par.; Mtt. 15, 21-28 (Mk. 7, 24-30) (Lk. 7, 1-10, cf. Jn. 4, 46-53); Mk. 5, 1-20 par.

⁶ Cf. Bosch, *Heidenmission*, p. 115; Jeremias, *Promise*, pp. 46f.

The second matter is that many think the early church would not have been reluctant to undertake the Gentile Mission if Jesus had told them to embark upon it.¹ However, this is again perhaps to be seen partly as a matter of order—to the Jew first²—and in part as a matter of disobedience and natural reluctance to embark upon a course of action of such magnitude and consequence. Besides, there were (according to Acts 7) some who wished to engage in a Gentile mission; and apparently there were some who quite spontaneously did so.³ Further, to some extent, the early discussion regarding the Gentile mission centred not upon whether or not the Gentiles should be evangelised, but whether or not they should become Jews *also*.⁴ In any case, an appeal to the disciples' behaviour is a dubious methodological principle; it is, for example, wrong to conclude that Jesus never spoke of his death and resurrection, simply because these events apparently took the disciples by surprise.

Apart from these objections which, we suggest, are based on rather inadequate grounds, Mk. 13, 10 and 14; 7-9 cannot be evaded. Jeremias⁵ who thinks that Jesus' work held significance and promise for the nations, but that this involved not a mission to the Gentiles but their ingathering at the End, claims that neither passage gainsays his thesis. Concerning Mk. 14, 7-9 par. he argues that the preaching referred to is angelic proclamation (cf. Rev. 14, 6f.) and that the original meaning (which has been re-interpreted by Mark and Matthew) ran thus—'Amen, I say unto you, when the triumphal news is proclaimed (by God's angel), to all the world, then will her act be remembered (before God), so that he may be gracious to her (at the last judgement)'.⁶ Three objections to this interpretation, however, must be raised:

i. Jeremias' interpretation of εἰς μνημόσυνον has been strongly criticised by D. R. Jones:⁷ even without entirely opposing Jeremias' understanding, it would surely be necessary, with Richardson to remember that εἰς μνημόσυνον 'may contain not merely one

¹ Cf. e.g. Cadoux, *Historic Mission*, p. 142.

² Hence the early practice of preaching in synagogues was not merely expediency, but conformity to this pattern.

³ Even during Jesus' ministry, cf. Mk. 1, 28; 1, 45; 5, 20, etc.

⁴ Cf. Jeremias, *Promise*, p. 25; and above p. 146 n.5.

⁵ *Promise, passim*.

⁶ *Promise*, p. 22; cf. also in *Z.N.W.* XLIV, 1952-3, pp. 103f.; *Eucharistic Words*, pp. 163f.; similarly Lohmeyer, *Markus, ad loc.*

⁷ In *J.T.S.* VI, 1955, pp. 183ff.

meaning but several, and several reminiscences and overtones of different biblical themes and passages.¹ Hence Beasley-Murray rightly contends that 'each case must be taken on its merits'.² To restrict εἰς μνημόσυνον here necessarily to a remembrance before God seems hardly justified: indeed 'in the absence of any indication here that the reference is to God's remembering the woman, it seems clear that the ordinary meaning should be preferred.'³

ii. Although τὸ εὐαγγέλιον may reflect early christian vocabulary⁴ this does not necessarily cast doubts upon the authenticity of the passage as a whole⁵ which is, in fact, well attested by the introductory formula αμην δὲ λέγω ὑμῶν and by the absence of the woman's name.⁶ The prevailing Markan usage is entirely against Jeremias' interpretation. It may well be too, that Rev. 14, 6 should be understood in terms of angelic powers behind the christian mission, rather than as a single event to occur at the End (Rev. 1-14, 14 is, after all, concerned with the events of the *interim*, and 14, 6ff. appear to have in mind a prolonged activity—cf. v. 12.)

iii. Jeremias takes ὅπου ἔσται in a temporal sense and as a single moment, 'when'—(as he says in Mk. 14, 14). But ὅπου ἔσται whether temporal or local is indefinite (in Mk. 14, 14 too), and bearing in mind the clause 'ye have the poor always with you . . .' (Mk. 14, 7) an activity of some duration and amidst the ordinary circumstances of life appears to be envisaged.

Kilpatrick⁷ thinks there is nothing to show that the object of preaching here (or in Mk. 13, 10) is any other than the Jewish population of Palestine and the Dispersion. On the other hand, there is nothing to suggest that it *is* so restricted, and the phrase εἰς ὅλον τὸν κόσμον definitely inclines to the opposite meaning.⁸ Jeremias himself understands this as 'the entire world'.⁹

¹ *Theology*, p. 368, n. 1.

² *Mark* 13, p. 40.

³ Cf. Cranfield, *Mark*, p. 418.

⁴ Cf. Rawlinson, *Mark*, p. 198; Bultmann, *Geschichte*, pp. 37f.; Taylor, *Mark*, p. 529; Klostermann, *Markus*, p. 158; Lagrange, *Marc*, p. 370.

⁵ Contrast Bultmann, *Geschichte*, pp. 37f.; Loisy, *Synoptiques*, II, p. 497; Klostermann, *Markus*, p. 158.

⁶ Cf. Lagrange, *Marc*, p. 370; Rawlinson, *Mark*, p. 198; Taylor, *Mark*, p. 529.

⁷ In *Studies in the Gospels*, pp. 145ff.

⁸ Cf. Cranfield, *Mark*, p. 399.

⁹ τὸν κόσμον in Mk. 8, 36 (the only other occurrence not counting Mk. 6, 15 in Mark) obviously means the entire world, as does the prevailing N.T. usage.

The other passage, Mk. 13, 10 par. is equally disputed. Many scholars¹ regard it as unauthentic, partly because its vocabulary seems to be distinctly Markan,² partly because v. 11 follows on naturally upon v. 9³ so that v. 10 seems to be an interruption, and partly because v. 10 is prosaic whereas vv. 9 and 11 are poetic.⁴ However, it is quite possible that the verse expresses in the vocabulary of the church a thought which may well be authentic to Jesus⁵ and the arrangement can be accounted for in terms of compilation.⁶ Many scholars, therefore, regard the verse as most probably genuine.⁷

Jeremias⁸ interprets the saying on similar lines to his understanding of Mk. 14, 9, and Kilpatrick⁹ follows this interpretation. However, the same objections apply. Witness and suffering are both addressed to the disciples as *their* lot during the interim (there is no hint of an angelic activity!). Of course, it is true, as Bosch writes, 'Das Leiden ist eigentlich des Jüngers Teil und Beitrag; die Mission dagegen ist nicht seine Sache sondern Sache Gottes . . .'¹⁰ But—as Bosch goes on to point out—neither is concerned with a passive expectation but with an active participation during the interim. The coming in of the heathen is effected through missionary preaching by the disciples.

Thus, preaching 'to the Gentiles' is placed side by side with the other 'signs' of the End as an activity which characterises the interim, and gives it the character of 'grace-time'. Yet, here especially, we perceive that duality of motifs characteristic of Jesus' outlook; for just as mission stamps the interim with the character of grace, so this mission, being a necessary¹¹ preliminary

¹ Cf. Lohmeyer, *Markus*, p. 272; Blunt, *Mark*, p. 239; Kümmel, *Promise*, pp. 84f.; Grässer, *Problem*, pp. 5f., 159ff.; Klostermann, *Markus*, *ad loc.*

² Cf. Taylor, *Mark*, p. 507 for the evidence.

³ Cf. Burney, *Poetry*, pp. 118f.; Lohmeyer, *Markus ad loc.*

⁴ But cf. Burney, *Poetry*, pp. 118f., followed by Beasley-Murray, *Future*, pp. 198f.

⁵ Cf. Taylor, *Mark*, p. 508.

⁶ Cf. Cranfield, *Mark*, p. 399.

⁷ Cf. Meinertz, *Theologie*, I, p. 64; Schniewind, *Markus*, *ad loc.*; Bosch, *Heidenmission*, pp. 149ff.; Cranfield, *Mark*, p. 399; Cullmann, *Time*, p. 149; Michaelis, *Verheissung*, pp. 19f.; Beasley-Murray, *Future*, pp. 194ff.

⁸ *Promise*, p. 22.

⁹ In *Studies in the Gospels*, pp. 145ff.

¹⁰ *Heidenmission*, p. 167.

¹¹ πρῶτον δεῖ, i.e. a divine necessity. *Studies in the Gospels* pp. 149f. punctuates in a way which separates this πρῶτον δεῖ (with εἰς πάντα τὰ ἔθνη) from

of the End continually points forward to the End. It is itself only made possible by the grace-motif allowing the End to be withheld, and it is a sign, a testimony that the End is near. The view that missionary preaching is in any way a substitute or compensation for the early expectation of the Parousia¹ is therefore wholly false. The missionary command and its fulfilment form an integral part of Jesus' outlook upon the future and shed light on the manner in which he conceived the Parousia to be imminent. Only the motif of grace withholds that which properly belongs to the complex of eschatological events which ended with the Ascension and Exaltation.

So we find, in Jesus' understanding of the future, the twin themes, eschatology and grace. On the one hand the sure and certain hope that the End, being the revelation of his person and work, the end of all ambiguity and contradiction, must be near; the presence of the Eschaton guarantees the nearness of the manifestation proper to the Eschaton. On the other hand, the conviction that God will allow men 'time for amendment of Life and the grace and comfort of his Holy Spirit':² time, that is, in which to enter *freely* into the significance of Christ's work, to exercise faith, and hope and love.

κηρυχθῆναι: but (cf. Cranfield, *Mark*, p. 398) this leaves *κηρυχθῆναι τὸ εὐαγγέλιον* rather pointless.

¹ Cf. Conzelmann, *Mitte*, p. 116; Grässer, *Problem*, pp. 199f.

² 1928 B.C.P., alternative form of absolution.